

Testimony for HB 629

Mr. Chairman, and Members of the House Judiciary Committee, my name is Marsha Straus, S T R A U S. I live on Fee-Simple land in Lake County, within the external boundaries of the Flathead Indian Reservation.

I moved to Ronan to enjoy my retirement. In my professional life I managed the disciplinary section of a large state agency. I have worked closely with many Assistant Attorney Generals (AAG's) in the preparation of all disciplinary legal proceedings for that state agency. I attended the presentations by our AAG's in front of different agencies, the public and administrative hearings.

The following represent just some of the arrogance and unprofessional behavior of the Chairman and AAG Weiner.

At the August compact commission meeting the Chairman told the public spectators that they would be allowed to stay and listen but their comments would be of no concern to the commission. The Chairman (a former AAG), Chris Tweeten, seemed to have had a senior moment regarding the Montana open meetings law referenced on the DNRC website.

During a meeting at the Kwa Tuk Nuk in Polson during public comment and questions, AAG Weiner verbally attacked a person commenting from the

audience regarding potential ethics violations by Mr. Weiner. AAG Weiner's response was "Bring it on".

At another meeting in Ronan, Chairman Tweeten blurted out a remark that he did not drink but not because he was in Alcoholic Anonymous.

No negotiations have taken place in the public meetings. All real negotiating has taken place when the public was not present. Comments and questions made by the citizens of Montana were rarely answered appropriately or taken into consideration in terms of the compact. The Chairman even ignored them at some meetings. People made comments and were told they did not have to worry about their water because it was protected in the Compact but there were no guarantees spelled out in the written Compact.

Dr. Kate Vandermoer wrote an informational paper as to why the compact is bad for Montana to present at educational public meetings throughout the state.

AAG Weiner wrote a 12 page response on the State of Montana's DNRC website. He was using the website to rip apart a paper that had not been sent to him.

The greatest exhibition of bad behavior by Chairman Tweeten and AAG Weiner has been the number of times "LITIGATION" has crossed their

lips to intimidate and scare the citizens of Montana; we would have to obtain a lawyer and spend lots of money to go to court if the Compact was not approved! This is referred to in the Bar regulations as coercion and is not allowed and may be grounds for discipline by the Montana Bar.

I am against the Compact for all the reasons given in previous proponent testimony and how these two attorneys have conducted the meetings and treated the public. I have never observed this behavior with any of the AAG's I have worked. Lastly, no one on the negotiating team represented the Citizens of Montana!

Mr. Chairman, with your permission, I'd like to provide you and the committee with a copy of my testimony.

Thank you for your time.